

# Great Oaks School Policies



Mobile Devices Policy			
<b>Version</b>	1	<b>Approved by</b>	Great Oaks Governors
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<b>Lead officer</b>	Headteacher	<b>Review date</b>	March 2026
<b>Contact</b>	Andy Evans	<b>Effective date</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2023

## Introduction and aims

At Great Oaks School we recognise that mobile phones and smart devices, including smart phones and smart watches are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents, and staff, as well as the wider school community. We also recognise the positive part mobile technologies can play for supporting many of our pupils in the wider world. At Great Oaks School, we feel it is vital to educate our pupils about responsible use and online harm. It is vital that this policy prioritises the safeguarding of its pupils, parents, and staff whilst looking for opportunities to prepare our students for the real world.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

*Safeguarding Policy, Child Protection Policy, E Safety Policy, Parent Code of Conduct, Staff Code of Conduct, Remote Education Policy, GDPR Data Protection Policy, Code of Conduct Policy.*

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom
- Ensuring professional boundaries between staff and pupils are upheld

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

Staff must ensure they secure their phones and any work phone given to them as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Failure by staff to do this could result in data breaches.

Staff need to report any breaches of this policy made by staff or pupils through emailing the Headteacher and/ or Heads of School.

The Headteacher & Head of School are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

## 2.2 Governors

Governors who attend 'The Safeguarding Committee' are responsible for reviewing the policy and associated impact annually.

## 3. Use of mobile phones by staff

### 3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, check emails or use the internet, while [children are present/during contact time]. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room). Best practice would see staff store phones in a class locked cupboard or in the staffroom until break times.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- For a pre- agreed call back which has been agreed with the leadership team
- If lone working (refer to Lone Working Policy and Risk Assessment).
- If completing 1:1 personalised learning in the community (work phones will be arranged for regular instances)
- Afternoon transport times from 2.40pm until 3.30pm.

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 02380767660 as a point of emergency contact.

If students require access to the internet or music as a calming strategy, this should be from a school device and not a staff members personal device.

### 3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to download any confidential school information. Staff are able to access work emails or use apps such as Class Dojo and Earwig to access information. Documents should only be accessed using the Office cloud and not downloaded onto personal devices.

Further information can be found in Great Oaks School GDPR Data Protection Policy.

### 3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. If there are pre-existing connections/ friends, staff must inform the Headteacher of details.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils. Further information can also be found in the E Safety Policy.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil when on school site. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/ activity, this must be done using school equipment and with pre- agreement from the Headteacher. If on a school trip and there is not the option of using a school device, an exception can be made to take photos or videos but by only using the apps, Class Dojo or Earwig. These apps will not store pictures or recordings on personal devices and will upload directly to the platform.

If a personal device is needed to be used under exceptional circumstances, staff must use 141 before dialling the number to protect their own contact details.

### 3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips if a class mobile is unavailable
- Supervising residential visits
- Using the transport WhatsApp communication groups via text from 2.40pm until 3.30pm. All information on these groups will be deleted every 24hrs and are not to include full names of students. First names and transport numbers are to only be used. Staff are not to use personal devices outside of these times.
- Completing 1:1 personalised learning session. A risk assessment will be put in place with details of communication arrangements.

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or by using the class mobile phone.
- If staff need to contact a parent due to exceptional reasons using their personal device, they must withhold their number by either changing the call settings on the device or dialling 141 before entering the phone number and notify the Headteacher of the communication.

### 3.5 Work phones

Every class is provided with a work mobile phone. This phone can be used for daily communication and school use. Photo's and recordings of students are not to be stored on work phones but instead uploaded using the Class Dojo App, the Earwig Academic App or Microsoft Office 365 cloud.

Work phones are also provided to members of the management team, identified staff who complete community based sessions and key individual staff who work within the HR, Administration, Finance and Operation teams.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

### 3.6 Sanctions

All staff are expected to actively enforce the school's mobile phone policy and to understand that the consistent application of this policy is the key to effectiveness.

If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff code of conduct and may face disciplinary action.

If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted, and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our allegations policy

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

## 4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Great Oaks School understands that many parents wish their child to have a mobile phone in their possession as they make their way to and from school each day. This is a reflection of parental concerns where students travel to school or their own, or where they are young carers who may need to be contactable. We also understand that many parents rely on the functionality of 'smart phones' such as tracking software or communication apps to keep in touch with their child at these times of the day.

As such, pupils at Great Oaks School are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school with them each day subject to the following stipulations:

- We would advise that students do not bring in expensive devices.
- On entry to the school site, pupils must switch off the mobile phone and hand this into their class teacher.
- Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones to listen to music while working. They can at the discretion of the class teacher use their mobile phones for specific life skills associated lessons- how to access a calculator or use a map etc. The mobile phone must be handed back to the class teacher as soon as the activity has finished.
- The mobile device may only be switched back on at the end of the school day once the pupil has left the school site.
- At the direction of the teacher for classroom activities/trips and visits/educational activities only

Pupils must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

### 4.1 Post 16

In Post 16, in consultation with the parents and individual students we will allow some young people to bring in a mobile phone. These young people will be expected to abide by the guidance in section 4 with one exception; as

young adults we will allow them to keep their mobile phones and follow the guidance for staff members under section 3 and will still be subject to the sanctions in 4.2

Mobile phones can be used to communicate with staff on community visits. Students will be given the mobile numbers for their class phones and or staff with work mobile phones. They will not be given the personal mobile numbers of staff at any time.

## 4.2 Sanctions

It is noted that as a prohibited item during the school day, the school has the power and authority to identify and confiscate unauthorised mobile devices or devices which are used in breach of this policy and to retain such devices until arrangements are made as outlined below for the return of such devices.

A breach of the school's Mobile Phone Policy may be identified as follows:

- Where a student has a clearly visible mobile phone in a situation where it is not permitted
- Where a student is openly using a mobile phone on the school site

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

## 5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors, contractors and outside agencies) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child. In these cases, parents and careers will be notified where possible.
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

A summary of the rules and expectations around mobile phone use will be provided through the safeguarding leaflet given when signing into school. A copy will be placed on the staff noticeboard.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents

- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

## 6. Use of 'Smart Watches'

Students and staff must not access calls or messages on smart watches during the school day when students are present. The same expectations and rules for smart watches apply as a mobile phone.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones and other communication devices are appropriately labelled and are handed into class teacher or the school office upon arrival. Mobile devices will be handed back to pupils before they depart for home.

Mobile devices should be labelled with the pupils first and last name on the device.

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches and possible disciplinary action.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school, this includes staff device.

Pupils and parents will be made aware of this disclaimer through

- A copy of school policy on Great Oaks school website

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked safe. They will be stored in a lock cabinet for any off-site provisions. The Headteacher will be responsible for the device.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office on both sites. They should be returned to the nearest staff member for off-site provisions. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

## 8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents

- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations
- Governors and Senior Leaders who attend the Safeguarding Committee, will review this policy annually. They will cross- reference any safeguarding developments with this policy to ensure all relevant areas adhere to the current advice and need across the school. Committee members will take into account the context of the individual school within the Academy Trust.

## 8. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils

### [Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement]

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent' or 'vibrate') and given to your classroom teacher on arrival.
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone at school.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
  - d. Taking photos and video's
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'. You will be taught about this at school.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.

10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
12. You can bring your phone to school, if you hand it in at the start of the day. You can collect this at the end of the day to take on transport.

### Appendix 2: Permission form for pupils to use mobile phones during lessons

Use this form if you normally allow pupils to bring their phones to school, but not to use them during lessons.

You may wish to get these forms counter-signed by a member of the senior leadership team, and to send a copy home with parents.

Pupil and lesson details	
<b>Pupil name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Class/lesson details:</b>	

Purpose
Teachers should fill out this box explaining how the phones will be used during the lesson



**Pupil agreement**

I understand that I am being allowed to use my phone during lesson time as part of an educational or class activity.

I will not use my phone for any other purpose than the one listed above. If my teacher, or any other member of staff, finds that I'm using my phone for any other reason, I understand that it will be confiscated.

I understand that the school's [code of conduct/ acceptable use agreement] on the use of mobile phones still applies.

Pupil signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 3: Mobile phone information for Visitors or Bank Staff found on the Safeguarding for Visitors leaflet.****Use of mobile phones in our school**

Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds; ideally keeping this in a personal bag at all times.

Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the waiting room, meeting room, staffroom or outside of reception.

Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff.

Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.